

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A security method of controlling access of human beings to a secure item, the method comprising the steps of:

(1) retrieving an identification code ~~feature data~~ from an identification object, ~~said retrieved feature data representative of facial features of a first person;~~

(1a) retrieving feature data from a memory using said identification code, said retrieved feature data representative of facial features of a first person;

(2) capturing facial features of a second person and generating feature data that is representative of facial features of ~~the~~ said second person; and

(3) comparing said retrieved feature data of said first person to said ~~applicant~~ second person feature data to determine security access for ~~the~~ said second person ~~applicant~~.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

(4) granting access to ~~the applicant~~ said second person if agreement between said retrieved feature data and said second person feature data is above a threshold; and

(5) denying access to ~~the applicant~~ said second person if agreement between said retrieved feature data and said ~~applicant~~ second person feature data is below said threshold.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (1) comprises the step of reading a magnetic medium to retrieve said identification code ~~retrieved feature data~~.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (1) comprises the step of reading an optical medium to retrieve said identification code ~~retrieved feature data~~.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (1) comprises the step of reading a bar code to retrieve said identification code ~~retrieved feature data~~.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (1) comprises the step of reading a 2-dimensional bar code to retrieve said identification code ~~retrieved feature data~~.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (2) comprises the steps of:

- (a) taking a picture of ~~the applicant~~ said second person, and generating image data from said picture;
- (b) determining a first separation distance on a face of ~~the applicant~~ said second person using said image data;

(c) determining a second separation distance on said face of ~~the~~
~~applicant~~ said second person using said image data; and

(d) normalizing said second separation distance relative to said first
separation distance resulting in a ratio that is included in said ~~applicant~~ second person
feature data.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (2) comprises the
steps of:

(a) taking a picture of ~~the applicant~~ said second person, and
generating image data from said picture;

(b) determining an eye-to-eye separation on a face of said ~~applicant~~
second person using said image data;

(c) determining a second separation distance on said face of said
~~applicant~~ second person using said image data; and

(d) normalizing said second separation distance relative to said eye-
to-eye separation resulting in a ratio that is included in said ~~applicant~~ second person
feature data.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (2) comprises the
steps of:

(a) taking a picture of said second person ~~applicant~~, and generating
image data from said picture;

- (b) determining an eye-to-eye separation on a face of said second person applicant using said image data;
- (c) determining a forehead-to-chin separation on said face of said second person applicant using said image data; and
- (d) normalizing said forehead-to-chin separation relative to said eye-to-eye separation resulting in a ratio that is included in said feature data.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (2) comprises the steps of:

- (a) taking a picture of said ~~applicant~~ second person, and generating image data from said picture;
- (b) determining an eye-to-eye separation of said ~~applicant~~ second person using said image data;
- (c) determining an ear-to-ear separation ~~on said face~~ of said ~~applicant~~ second person using said image data; and
- (d) normalizing said ear-to-ear separation relative to said eye-to-eye separation resulting in a ratio that is included in said ~~applicant~~ second person feature data.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (2) comprises the steps of:

- (a) taking a picture of said ~~applicant~~ second person; and

(b) determining a separation distance between ~~[[a]]~~ first and second ~~feature~~ features on a face of ~~the applicant~~ said second person, said ~~applicant~~ second person feature data representative of said separation distance.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein step (b) comprises the steps of:

- (i) locating a first eye and a second eye of ~~the applicant~~ said second person; and
- (ii) determining an eye-to-eye separation between said first and second eye.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, further comprising the steps of:

- (c) determining a second separation distance between a third feature and a fourth feature on the face of ~~the applicant~~ said second person; and
- (d) normalizing said second separation distance relative to said first separation distance.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

(4) capturing said facial features of ~~the card owner~~ said first person to generate ~~said card feature data~~; and

(5) ~~writing~~ storing said ~~card~~ first person feature data [to] in said ~~card medium~~ memory prior to step (1).

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (3) comprises the step of comparing a normalized forehead-to-chin separation of ~~the card owner~~ said first person with a normalized forehead-to-chin separation of ~~the applicant~~ said second person.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (3) comprises the step of comparing a normalized nostril-to-nostril separation of ~~the card owner~~ said first person with a normalized nostril-to-nostril separation of ~~the applicant~~ said second person.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (3) comprises the step of comparing a normalized feature separation of ~~the card owner~~ said first person with a normalized feature separation of ~~the applicant~~ said second person.

20. (Currently Amended) A method of limiting security access to an authorized card owner, the method comprising the steps of:

(1) reading a medium of an access card to retrieve ~~facial features~~ an identification code of the card owner;

(1a) retrieving feature data from a storage memory in a remote location using said identification code, said retrieved feature data representative of facial features of the card owner;

(2) taking a picture of an applicant and determining facial features of the applicant using the picture; and

(3) comparing said facial features of the card owner with said facial features of the applicant to determine access of the applicant.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20, further comprising the steps of:

(4) granting access to the applicant if there is sufficient agreement between said applicant facial features and said card owner facial features; and

(5) denying access to the applicant if there is there is not sufficient agreement between said applicant facial features and said card owner facial features.

22. (Currently Amended) A method of determining if an applicant is the owner of an access card for security access purposes, the method comprising the steps of:

(1) reading a bar code on an access card, said bar code having feature data representative of facial features of a card owner, said feature data including a normalized forehead-to-chin separation distance of said card owner;

(2) capturing facial features of an applicant and generating applicant feature data that is representative of said applicant facial features, said step (2)

comprising the steps of

(a) taking a picture of the applicant,
(b) determining an eye-to-eye separation of the applicant using said picture, and

(c) determining a ~~second~~ forehead-to-chin separation distance on a face of the applicant using said picture, and normalizing said ~~second~~ forehead-to-chin separation distance to said eye-to-eye separation;

(3) comparing said applicant feature data to said card feature data to determine security access, comprising the step of comparing said normalized forehead-to-chin separation distance of said applicant with ~~a corresponding~~ said normalized forehead-to-chin separation distance of said card owner that is included in said card feature data.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Canceled)

25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A method of recording facial features of a person in a storage medium, the method comprising the steps of:

- (1) taking a picture of the person[,];
- (2) generating feature data representative of facial features of the person, said feature data including a forehead-to-chin separation distance; and
- (3) writing said feature data to said storage medium.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein step (3) comprises the step of writing said feature data to a magnetic medium on an access card.

28. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein step (3) comprises the step of writing said feature data to an optical storage medium on an access card.

29. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein step (3) comprises the step of writing said feature data to a bar code on an access card.

30. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein step (3) comprises the steps of:

- (a) writing an ID code associated with the person to an access card;

and

- (b) storing said feature data in a memory that is cataloged using said ID code.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein step (2) of generating feature data comprises the steps of:

- (a) determining ~~a first~~ an eye-to-eye separation distance ~~between a first facial feature and a second facial feature~~ using said picture;
- (b) determining a ~~second~~ forehead-to-chin separation distance ~~between a third facial feature and a fourth facial feature~~ using said picture; and
- (c) normalizing said ~~second~~ forehead-to-chin separation distance relative to said ~~first~~ eye-to-eye separation distance resulting in a ratio that is included in said feature data.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Canceled)

35. (Canceled)

36. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ A system for determining security access of an applicant, comprising:

- a medium reader, for reading an access card medium to retrieve an identification code associated with ~~card feature data, said card feature data representative of facial features of~~ a card owner;
- a memory that stores facial feature data that is cataloged according to said identification code;

a feature extractor for taking a picture of said applicant, and generating feature data representative of facial features of said applicant; and

a processor for comparing said card feature data to said applicant feature data to determine security access.

37. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein said medium reader comprises a magnetic reader for reading a magnetic card medium on said access card to retrieve said identification code ~~card feature data~~.

38. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein said medium reader comprises a bar code reader for reading a bar code medium on said access card to retrieve said identification code ~~card feature data~~.

39. (Original) The apparatus of claim 38, wherein said bar code reader comprises a means for reading a 2 dimensional bar code.

40. (Original) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein said feature extractor comprises:

a camera for taking a picture of the applicant; and

a second processor for generating said applicant feature data based on image data that is representative of said picture, said processor determining a separation

distance based on a first facial feature and a second facial feature, said applicant feature data including said separation distance.

41. (Original) The apparatus of claim 39, further comprising a means for generating said image data from said picture.

42. (Original) The apparatus of claim 41, wherein said means for generating said image data comprises a computer scanner.

43. (Original) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein said camera is a digital camera, said digital camera generating said image data from said picture.

44. (Currently Amended) A system for determining security access of an applicant, comprising:

a medium reader, for reading an access card medium to retrieve an identification code that identifies a card owner ~~card feature data, said card feature data representative of facial features of a card owner;~~

a memory that stores facial feature data that is cataloged according to said identification code;

a camera for taking a picture of the applicant, said camera including a means for generating image data representative of said picture; and

a processor coupled to said medium reader and said camera, said processor including computer program code for causing said processor to determine if

the applicant is the card owner using said image data of said applicant and said card feature data, said computer program code comprising,

first program code means for causing said processor to determine an applicant feature separation using said image data, said applicant feature separation representing a distance between a first feature and a second feature on a face of said applicant,

second program code means for causing said processor to access said memory using said identification code and to retrieve a card owner feature separation ~~using said card feature data~~, said card owner feature separation representing a distance between a first feature and a second feature on a face of said card owner, and

third program code means for causing said processor to compare said card owner feature separation to said applicant feature separation and determine agreement for security access.

45. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 44, wherein said program code means further comprises:

fourth program code means for causing said processor to grant access to the applicant if agreement is above a threshold; and

fifth program code means for causing said processor to deny access to the applicant if agreement is below a threshold.

46. (Original) The system of claim 44, wherein said medium reader is a bar code reader.

47. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 44, wherein said card owner feature separation is normalized to an eye-to-eye separation of the card owner, and wherein said first program code means comprises program code means for causing said processor to determine an eye-to-eye separation of the applicant using the image data, and normalize said applicant feature separation relative to said eye-to-eye separation of the applicant.

48. (Original) The system of claim 44, wherein said card owner feature separation is a normalized forehead-to-chin separation of the card owner, and wherein said applicant feature separation is a normalized forehead-to-chin separation of the applicant.

49. (Original) The system of claim 44, wherein said card owner feature separation is a normalized nostril-to-nostril separation of the card owner, and wherein said applicant feature separation is a normalized nostril-to-nostril separation of the applicant.

50. (Original) The system of claim 46, wherein said card owner feature separation is a normalized ear-to-ear separation of the card owner, and wherein said applicant feature separation is a normalized ear-to-ear separation of the applicant.

51. (Currently Amended) An access card for use with a security system, said access card comprising a storage medium that stores an identification code associated with an owner of said access card, wherein said identification code catalogs feature data in a memory external to said access card, said feature data representative of facial features associated with an said owner of the access card.

52. (Currently Amended) The access card of claim ~~52~~ 51, wherein said medium is a bar code.

53. (Original) The access card of claim 51, wherein said feature data includes separation distances associated with said facial features of said card owner.

54. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein said memory is in a remote location relative to at least one of said medium reader, said feature extractor, and said processor.